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Stark County Law Library Association

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BEGINNERS Spreadsheet 102 – Calculating Loss of Wages

Last month we got our feet wet working with a spreadsheet using only text. This month we will begin learning what spreadsheets do best, crunch numbers.

Your client, John Doe, was in an accident on December 12, 2001 and is unable to do his job. He is out of sick leave, but because he was on his way to work when the accident happened he is suing his company. His annual salary normally increases by \$500 every 6 months. We need to show how much money he is losing by being out of work.

We are going to create a spreadsheet to do just that! Open a spreadsheet program and enter the following headings.

We know that John's salary when he left work was \$36,000/year. Enter that

	DAMAGES	FOR LOSS OF	EARNINGS		
Annual Salary	Daily Salary	Date of Injury / Raises	Date Rate Ended	Days Lost	Lost Money

amount into cell A4. Now highlight all of column A, by clicking on the "A", then from the FORMAT menu select "Cells" and click on the "Number" tab at the top of the dialog box and select "Currency" then "OK." Columns B and F will also always contain currency figures so repeat the above procedure for both those columns.

We also know that John left his job on December 12, 2001 so enter that information in cell C4 and in cell D4 enter "12/31/01" (the last day that John earned \$36,000/yr.) To enter a date in Excel just position your cursor on a cell and type in a date in this format: MM/DD/YY, for example 11/20/96 or 9/3/96 or 01/03/95. You can type in leading zeros in a date or not; the program does not care. However, leading zeros will be dropped. If you just type in MM/DD, Excel will assume the current year. To change the format, click on Format>Number>Date> and select the type you prefer from the list.

Now we will start seeing the real power of a spreadsheet. The cells in column B require calculations. Namely, column A divided by 365. To do this click your mouse in cell B4 and type "=A4/365" and "Enter." The equal sign tells the computer that anything typed after it is a calculation and not text. Now that we have John's daily salary, let's calculate the number of days he has lost due to his injuries. Click your mouse in E4 and type "=D4-C4" or you can do it quicker by typing the "=" then clicking on D4, add the minus sign, then click in cell C4 and the computer will fill in the equation for you. Our last calculation is the amount of money that John has lost.

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BEGINNER

Spreadsheets 102 (Continued)

Click in cell F4 and type “=B4*E4” and we are done with all the hard work. It is time to check your work, does your “Row 4” look like the one below?

	DAMAGES	FOR LOSS OF	EARNINGS		
Annual Salary	Daily Salary	Date of Injury / Raises	Date Rate Ended	Days Lost	Lost Money
\$36,000.00	\$98.63	12-Dec-01	31-Dec-01	19	\$1,873.97
\$36,500.00	\$100.00	1-Jan-02	30-Jun-02	180	\$18,000.00
\$37,000.00	\$101.37	1-Jul-02	17-Oct-02	108	\$10,947.95
				Total	\$30,821.92

Now it is time to explore the real power of a spreadsheet. On January 1, 2002 John would have gotten his \$500 raise, so enter \$36,500 into cell A5, and the date “1 Jan 02” into C5. The end of that 6-month range, 30 June 02, goes into cell D5. Now instead of entering calculation formulas, all you have to do is click on cell B4 and put your mouse on the small black square in the bottom right hand corner (your mouse will change from a white cross to a black one), drag that box down the column one to cell B4, release and presto John’s new daily salary appears. Do the same thing for columns E and F.

See if you can finish the scenario. I didn’t tell you how to do the “Total”, but I think you can figure out how to get the spreadsheet to add column F.

If your spreadsheet looks like mine above, you’ve done a great job and are ready for class 103!

INTERMEDIATE

Your Windows & “F” Keys



Do you use the key on your computer keyboard that pictures the Windows logo? If not, maybe you will after reading what shortcuts it allows.

- Used alone, it opens the Start menu.
- With R, it launches the Run dialog box.
- With D it minimizes all open windows or the combination used a second time restores the open applications.
- With E, the Windows key opens Windows Explorer.
- With F it searches for a file or folder.
- With Tab it changes the focus to other programs open on the task bar.
- With the Break key it opens the System Properties dialog box.

- If you're using Windows XP the Windows key and U combination opens the Utility Manager.
- With L, the Windows key locks the workstation for privacy.¹

And what about those “F” keys at the top of your keyboard? Do you know what they do?

- F1 - Brings up the “Help” screen.
- F3 - Brings up the “Find” file or folder screen.
- F4 - In Internet Explorer drops down the Address bar showing recently visited sites.

INTERMEDIATE Your Windows & "F" Keys (Continued)

- F5 - Brings up the "Go To" screen and in Word it combines "Go To" with Find and Replace.
- F7 - Brings up the Spell Checker.
- F8 - Performs a "Select All".
- F9 - Reduces the screen to 36% (in Publisher) and a second hit returns it to full size.

ADVANCED Find an Expert Witness

This month's Advanced column is a synopsis of Jim Robinson's article for LLRX.com, "Finding and Researching Expert Witnesses on the Web." It can be found on the web at: <http://www.llrx.com/features/findingexperts.htm>.

Before you can intelligently search for an expert witness, you have to have a basic knowledge of his/her expertise.

"Careful investigation of the topic first will allow the researcher to know what questions to ask the potential expert, and will lead to the names of experts in that field."²

Begin by searching library catalogs for expert witness resources. Start with our own library (check the back of a recent newsletter for information on how to connect to our catalog, then move on to the Stark County District Library at <http://www.stark.lib.oh.us/>. If you still haven't found much material, go to the Library of Congress website at <http://catalog.loc.gov>, or the commercial sites (which often include reviews of your potential witnesses' books) <http://www.Amazon.com> and <http://www.barnesandnoble.com>, all the while noting authors' names that appear often while you search. This

list will become your potential witness list.

Next, check the web itself using Google in order to include PDF documents and PowerPoint presentations, and LawCrawler <http://lawcrawler.lp.findlaw.com> to limit your search to legal sites. Be sure to use one of the "pay-per-click" engines, such as MSN <http://www.msn.com> or Overture <http://www.overture.com> for your expert. "Paying to be listed as the number one expert in one's field could be an issue in the cross-examination of that expert."³

Other places to search are:

- University faculties using Google's "advanced search" button
- A directory of healthcare organizations at: <http://www.jcaho.org/qualitycheck/directry/directry.asp>
- "For virtually every field and interest there is an association, and in those associations are potential experts." Try Associations on the Net at the Internet Public Library site; <http://www.ipl.org/div/aon/>
- If your topic is a product, use the Thomas Register <http://www.thomasregister.com> for information about the company and its products.

Special points of interest:

- **Know something about the subject before searching for an expert in the field.**
- **Create a list of potential experts.**
- **Check referral services to determine whether your candidate is willing to help.**
- **Evaluate each potential witness**

ADVANCED

Find an Expert Witness (Continued)



Having compiled a list of potential witnesses, the next step is to determine if he/she is available to testify. There are several professional witness referral companies, TASA <<http://tasanet.com>>, ForensisGroup, <<http://www.forensisgroup.com>> and Med-Quest <<http://www.medquestltd.com>>, but you will have to pay for their information. Robinson's article also includes some free sites. Experts.com <<http://www.experts.com>>, Findlaw <<http://www.findlaw.com>>, Law.com <<http://www.law.com>>, and Hieros Gamos <<http://www.hg.org>> also have online directories with short biographies and links to the expert's web site.

Lawyers Weekly <<http://www.lawyersweeklyexperts.com/>> has one of the most comprehensive experts listings found anywhere. It includes a broad range of specialties from across the country, and it is updated daily.⁵

Robinson concludes his article with sites and suggestions for evaluating each potential expert. These include: a Google search of the

expert, the expert's own website, Idex <<http://www.idex.com>> if you are a member and a defense attorney, Juritas <<http://www.juritas.com>>, and the ATLA Exchange <<http://www.atla.org>>. He suggests running a search for your expert in one of his/her local newspapers, searching for your expert in litigation briefs using The Brief Reporter <<http://www.briefreporter.com>> or Juritas <<http://www.juritas.com>>, searching jury verdicts and settlements using Morelaw <<http://www.morelaw.com>> or for a fee NASJV at <<http://www.juryverdicts.com>>, and searching reported decisions at Findlaw <<http://www.findlaw.com>> and LexisOne <<http://www.lexisone.com>>.

Finally, it is very important to understand what type of appearance the expert will make. On the JurisPro web site <<http://www.JurisPro.com>>, visitors can see a photo and hear the expert speak through streaming audio. This is extremely valuable in evaluating his/her ability to speak on his/her area of expertise.

FOOTNOTES

¹ "Neat Net Tricks." (electronic newsletter). By Jack Teems. NNT@silver.lyris.net, to subscribe <<http://neatnettricks.com/>>. 1 April 2001 (copy on file with author)

²⁻⁴ Robinson, Jim Esq. "Finding and Researching Expert Witnesses on the Web." LLRX.com 1 Oct 02. Law Library Resource Xchange, LLC. 22 Oct 02. <<http://www.llrx.com/features/findingexperts.htm>>

⁵ www.lawyersweeklyexperts.com. 2002. Lawyers Weekly, Inc. 22 Oct 02. <<http://www.lawyersweeklyexperts.com/>>